

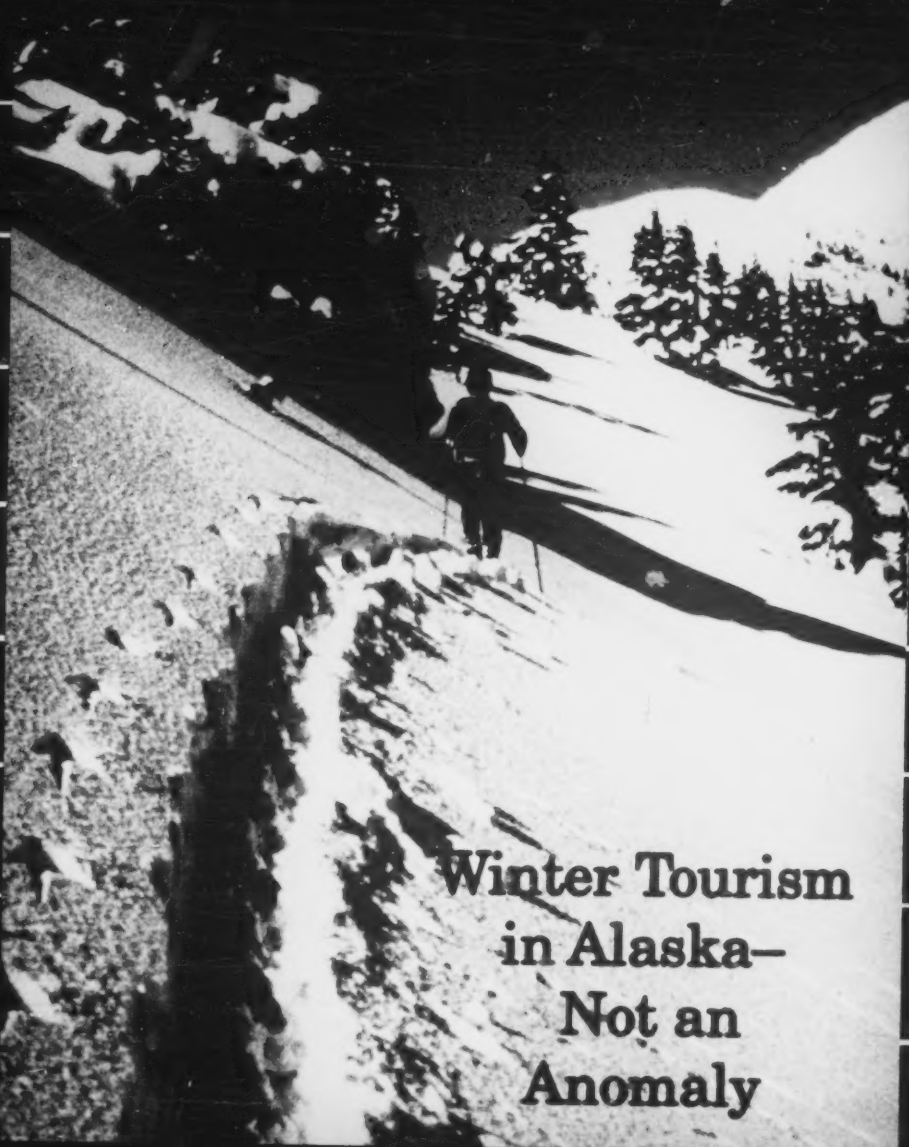
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ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

December 1988

Alaska's
Native Population:
An Updated Profile

Alaska's Employment
Scene: October Figures
Show Rebound Continuing



Winter Tourism
in Alaska—
Not an
Anomaly

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

Steve Cowper, Governor, State of Alaska

**Jim Sampson, Commissioner,
Department of Labor**

**Frank Spargo, Director,
Administrative Services**

**Chuck Caldwell, Chief,
Research and Analysis**

John Boucher and Michael Fagan, Editors

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Contents

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | Winter Tourism in Alaska—
Not an Anomaly |
| 10 | Alaska's Native Population: An Updated Profile |
| 17 | Alaska's Employment Scene: October Figures
Show Rebound Continuing |
| 18 | Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment |
| 20 | Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries |
| On back
cover | Labor Force by Region Census Area |

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Courtesy of Alaska Department of Tourism

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The following notes pertain to Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment Tables:

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark date: March 1987.

P/ Denotes preliminary estimates

R/ Denotes revised estimates

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Winter Tourism in Alaska— Not an Anomaly

By Neal Fried and Holly Stinson

Some people may think winter tourism in Alaska is a contradiction in terms. However, the industry is very much alive in the state and slowly growing in spite of a three-year recession in the economy.

For the purposes of this article, 'winter tourists' are defined as all those who take advantage of winter recreation. A few winter tourists come from out of state; they are included in this brief study as 'winter visitors' no matter what their primary purpose for visiting might be. The words 'tourist,' 'visitor,' 'guest,' and 'traveler' have identical meanings.

Out-of-state guests make up a minority of those using winter recreation facilities in Alaska. It is those who are already here in the state who constitute the vast majority of people enjoying recreation, sporting events, festivals and other attractions during the winter months.

Although winter officially begins Dec. 21, Alaska's winter season begins much earlier. Activities staged in the state between November and March are discussed in this article, along with some activities that take place in the 'shoulder season' months of October, April and May.

Anchorage has been in the public spotlight lately for making two unsuccessful winter Olympic bids. This has created renewed interest in developing world class, two-season resorts near the city. Proposals for these resorts are examined in this article, as are other less extravagant options for future winter recreation opportunities in the state.

**There is a renewed interest
in developing world class
resorts near Anchorage**

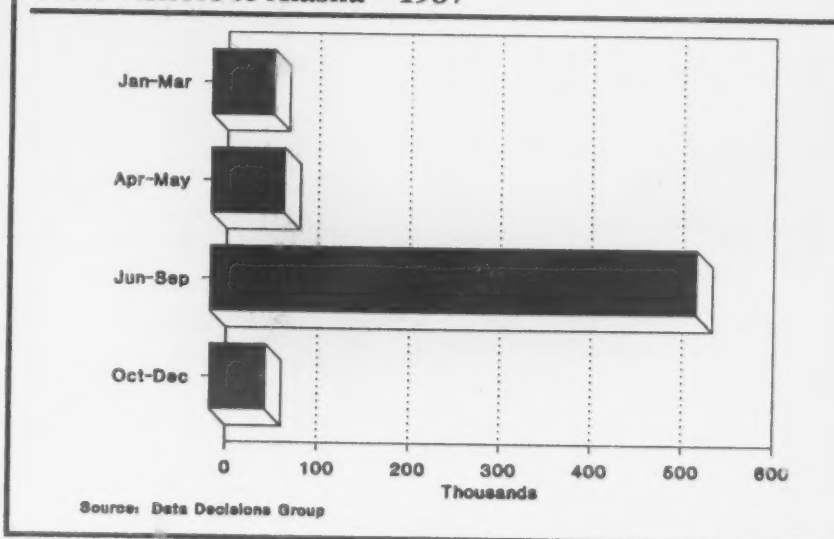
Out-of-state Winter Tourists Are Few Compared to Summer Tourists

Winter tourism certainly has a much lower profile than the summer tourist season of June through September. The number of visitors in the summer recently equaled or exceeded the state population: 533,000 in 1987, over 550,000 in 1986, and 473,000 in 1985. In contrast, winter visitor numbers are very small: at most they number 25,000 per month. (See Figure 1.) The number of winter visitors increases as the season passes; about 30% arrive in the fall months (October, November and December), 33% arrive in the winter (January, February and March), and 37% arrive in the spring months of April and May.

'Winter visitors' is defined as all people arriving from out-of-state, not just those coming for a vacation only. There are those who come to visit friends and relatives, to attend conventions, to conduct business, and those employed seasonally. While the summer months have the greatest percentage of guests coming here to vacation only, many visiting for other purposes in the winter make time during their trip for some type of recreational tour.

Total Visitors to Alaska – 1987

Figure 1



Nearly one-half
of winter visitors
are here on business

Winter guests differ from those of the summer in many respects. First of all, the number of vacationers drops significantly from one season to the other. (There were nearly 370,000 vacationers in the summer of 1987, but only 24,808 vacationers in the state between October and March 1988). Conversely, the proportion of business travelers is greater during the winter than the summer: business travelers make up almost half of all Alaska guests during the winter season. (See Figure 2.) During the winter, a much higher percentage of those traveling for pleasure are repeat visitors. Specifically, 40% of vacationers travelling to this state during the winter are repeat visitors, while only 15% of summer vacationers are repeat guests. And winter visitors are usually younger than those here in the summer. The average age of those visiting the state during the winter is 40; the average age of those visiting during the summer is 50. In addition, about 65% of the state's winter guests are from the western states — especially California and Washington.

The Local Market: Alaskans Touring Alaska

The number of winter travelers during 1986-87 was down by 16,000 from the number arriving one year earlier. And the figures for the winter of 1987-88 were down by about 1,000 over the previous year. It is interesting to note,

however, that ski resorts and other winter recreation facilities reported increased usage during those same years. Since visitors from out of state have not increased in number, but use of the facilities have, it is clear that the vast majority using facilities are local Alaskans. A look at the difference between the typical Alaskan and the typical non-Alaskan American explains why winter sporting and recreational activities are so heavily used by people living in this state.

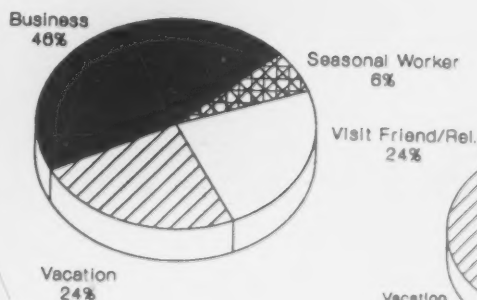
Americans have become more health conscious in the 1980's, and Alaskans are no exception. Alaskans are younger and more outdoor-oriented than residents of other states. Also, Alaskans are involved in outdoor recreation of all kinds at almost five times the national average. They participate in winter sports at two-to-eight times the national average. For example, 26% of Alaskans — versus 3% of other Americans — are cross country skiers; 20% of Alaskans — versus 3% of other Americans — use off-road vehicles for recreation; and 14% — versus 6% — are alpine skiers. Alaska offers a long season and an almost ideal climate for winter recreation. Alaskans take advantage of this in large numbers.

Going to the Dogs

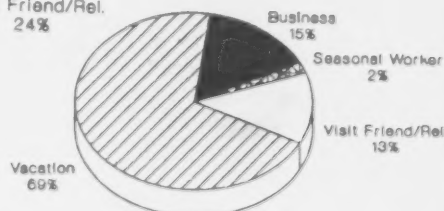
Sporting events attract the largest portion of winter visitors to Alaska. They come as spectators, as well as participants. Dog mushing enjoyed remarkable growth in the 1970's and the 1980's. It was declared the official state sport by the legislature in 1972. Dog sled races of sprint distance (20 to 30 miles in length) have been the backbone of winter festivals in Fairbanks and Anchorage for decades. Because of the short time period in which these races are run, people are able to watch both the start and finish of a race. Often, local businesses are patronized by the spectators during the slack periods as they await the teams at the finish line. The sprint race staged during Anchorage's winter festival, Fur Rendezvous, remains one of the largest spectator events in the state. Almost 40,000 people turn out to watch it in person. Many more watch it on local television.

Figure 2
Visitors by Trip Purpose — 1987

WINTER/SHOULDER*



SUMMER*



*Summer (Jun-Sep)
Winter (Nov-Mar), Shoulder (Oct, Apr, May)
Source: Data Decisions Group

Long distance races — from 200 to over 1,000 miles in length — have made a comeback in Alaska. After a heyday in the earlier part of this century, long distance races faded away until the Iditarod Sled Dog Race was developed in the 1970s. The Iditarod has created renewed interest in and growth of the sport. Further, it has spawned a host of other "Iditaraces" along the historic Iditarod trail: races involving skiers, snowshoers, bicyclists, and youngsters driving dog teams. Officials with CBS television estimated that almost 5 million people nationwide watched the finish of the 1985 Iditarod. Such widespread coverage can only help kindle interest in Alaska as a tourist destination.

With the success of the Iditarod, other long distance races have developed, including the Kuskokwim 300, which runs from Bethel to Aniak and back, and the Yukon Quest, which runs between Fairbanks and Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. Although a small group travels to Alaska from the Lower '48 for these races, local Alaskans turn out in large numbers. Another trend in the sport of dog mushing is in the growing number of small races run in local communities and villages throughout the winter months.

Other winter sporting events, held at indoor arenas and rinks, also draw large numbers of spectators. Hockey, basketball, and curling are all popular in the state. Sports promoters in Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks regularly draw teams and their accompanying staff and boosters from Outside by hosting national and international competitions. The majority of spectators, though, are again local Alaskans. Basketball plays a big role in many bush communities during the winter months. When competing teams travel to other communities in the state, members of the teams become winter tourists themselves.

Skiing: The Winter Sport

Skiing in its various forms — downhill, cross-country, and telemarking — draws the most participants of any sport in the state. It is this sport which holds the most potential for bringing in guests from the Lower 48, Europe or Asia during the winter months. Cross-

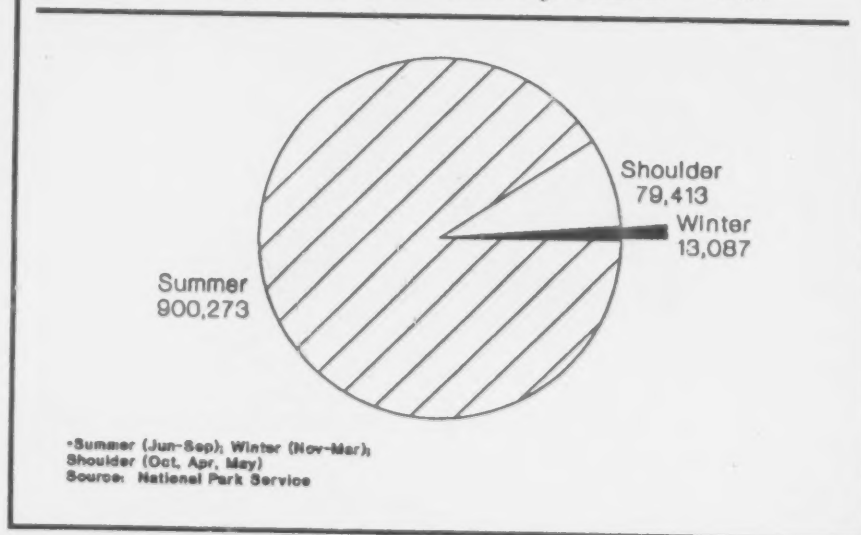
country skiing, which surged in popularity during the last two decades, is responsible for the growth of many small lodges which cater to these skiers. Many of the lodges offer trails groomed for skiing, hot meals, showers, and saunas and hot tubs. The lodge operators find their market almost exclusively in Alaskans who want to get away to be weekend tourists.

The owner of Hatcher Pass Lodge in the Talkeetna Mountains says that he can count on his fingers the number of non-Alaskan tourists who have in recent years vacationed at his lodge. But business at his lodge has grown 10 to 20% per year over the last several years. He estimates that winter activity in the Hatcher Pass area has doubled, or even tripled, in the last 15 years. On any given winter weekend, the area is used not only by cross-country, telemark and downhill skiers, but also by winter enthusiasts who mush dogs, parasail, snow machine, sled, and snowboard.

The numbers of people visiting 'all parks' in the state drop during the winter months, compared to the summer months. (See Figures 3 and 4.) ('All parks' means, for the purposes of this article, both 'unofficial' parks [state lands which are not dedicated park lands but are used for that purpose by the public] and the official state and federal park lands.) Trail systems in the parks are used extensively in the winter by cross-country skiers, dog

Skiing holds the most potential for drawing the international tourist here during winter

Figure 3
Visitors to Major National Parks by Season - 1987



Year-round use a goal for winter resorts

mushers, and by those using snow machines and snowshoes. Probably the lone exception to this trend of fewer winter park visitors is the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve near Haines. When the greatest number of eagles flock to the Chilkat River for salmon (during the months of October, November and December), the greatest number of visitors flock there, also.

While downhill ski resorts have great potential for drawing tourists from outside the state, it is mostly Alaskans who currently patronize them. The largest downhill resort, Alyeska, is just 40 miles south of Anchorage and pulls about 99% of its skiers from the Anchorage, MatSu, and Kenai Peninsula region. The number of "skier visits" (lift tickets sold) has grown steadily over recent years. During the 1987-88 season, Alyeska registered 160,000 skier visits. (Expansion plans currently underway at the resort are discussed later in this article.) The few other facilities scattered around the state are also heavily used. The number of skiers at Hilltop in Anchorage increased from 38,000 in its first year of operation, 1983-84, to 53,000 in the 1987-88 season. That increase came in spite of a recession in the economy and a considerable drop in that region's population. It is statistics like these that lead many people to believe that there is a market for additional ski facilities in Alaska.

An important goal of many winter resorts is to improve their profitability by increasing and diversifying their facility's use. Snow-making equipment can help stretch the skiing season to some extent. Another way to increase use of a facility is to operate the ski lifts year-round. Alyeska, for example, operates a ski lift during the summer months; 35,000 summer tourists rode the lift in the summer of 1986 to gain a summertime scenic view from the mountaintop. If a winter facility can diversify by selling both summer and winter recreation, it can prove itself a more profitable enterprise.

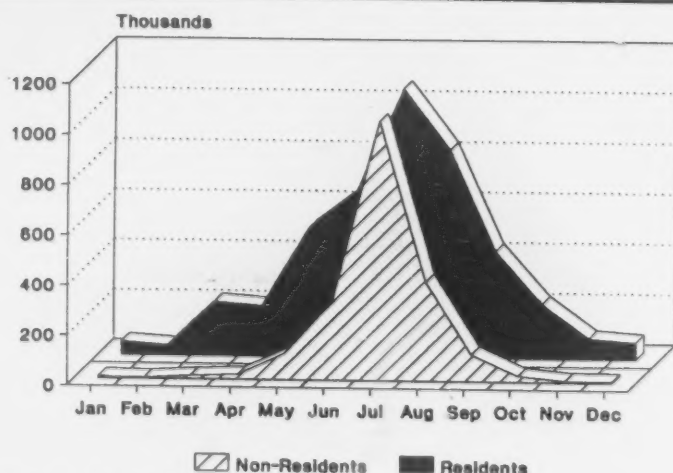
There's More: Luge, Northern Lights....

In addition to the common winter sports, Alaska also hosts unusual winter activities. The luge track in Fairbanks is one of only three such tracks in the U.S. The Fairbanks club that operates it offers rides to the public between Thanksgiving and March. Heliskiing — flying to the top of a mountain or icefield in a helicopter and then skiing to the bottom — is becoming popular and can be enjoyed year-round. Recent negative cost factors, however, have reined in customer traffic for both heliskiing and another popular winter activity, hot air ballooning. It has been huge increases in insurance rates which have slowed the growth of these sports.

The aurora borealis, or northern lights, is a phenomenon unique to the northern regions and a possible resource that could be exploited for the purposes of boosting winter tourism. The northern lights have become a marketable item for hot springs resorts located near Fairbanks. Area resorts there promote their facilities in the winter not only for cross-country skiing and for the springs themselves, but also as excellent vantage points for the viewing of the famous phenomenon.

Further, operators of Chena Hot Springs report that their customer base is diversifying. Increasing numbers of Japanese are patronizing the springs, and more people on organized tours are stopping there. In past years, Chena Hot Springs' primary customer has been the Alaskan.

Figure 4
State Park Visitors — 1987



Source: Alaska DNR, Div. of Parks

And ice climbers from around the world have adopted Valdez as a favorite destination for the 50 frozen waterfalls located near that city in Keystone Canyon. Climbers from as far as Austria and New Zealand have been drawn to Valdez's Ice Climbing Festival. The festival is an annual event that has been staged every February since 1983 by the community of Valdez.

Another trend in the business of Alaska winter tourism is the burgeoning popularity of 'adventure trips.' These adventures include heliskiing, skiing Mt. McKinley, and travelling and camping via dogsled over considerable distances into the backcountry. One adventure business in Fairbanks offers a variety of trips, including a two-hour sled dog tour of the local area and a \$2,200 package of glacier skiing for seven people. The number of travelers drawn by 'adventure trips' is probably quite small now. There may be, though, significant future traffic in this niche of the tourism business.

Winter Festivals and Conventions, Too

An alternative for tourists seeking entertainment other than outdoor winter recreation are the festivals and carnivals held in both large and small towns throughout the state. Fur Rondy in Anchorage, Taku Rondy in Juneau, and the Fairbanks Ice Festival host sporting events but also offer many other tourist-drawing activities — including parades, fur auctions, arts and crafts exhibits, snow and ice sculpting competitions, dinners, dances, and more. Some guests from outside Alaska are attracted to these festivals. One survey showed that over 13% of airline passengers arriving in Anchorage during the month of February were coming to attend or participate in Fur Rendezvous. Festivals smaller than the ones held in Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks, but just as important to their townspeople, include the Iceworm Festival in Cordova and the Beaver Roundup in Dillingham. Another, the Festival of Native Arts in Fairbanks, an annual event in its 16th year, last year attracted 13,000 people from throughout Alaska and Canada.

Conventions bring a measurable number of visitors to Alaska in the

winter, too. Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau all host conventions during both the winter and summer seasons. Revenues raised in Anchorage via that city's hotel/bed tax have been twice as great in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 1988 and 1987 than in the 1st and 4th quarters of 1988 and 1987. (See Figure 5.) Juneau's revenue picture is different. That city's bed tax revenues have been highest in the October/November/December quarter. (Again, see Figure 5.)

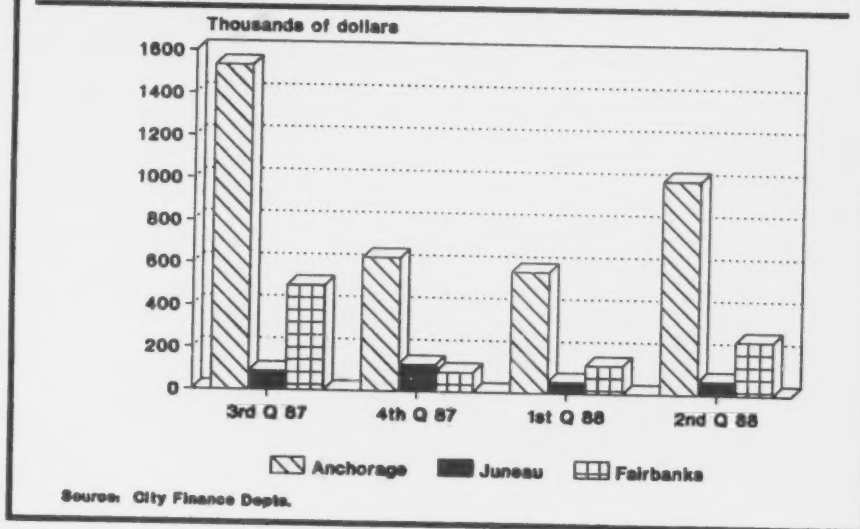
Even smaller towns bring in considerable numbers with conventions. Sitka hosted over 2,000 conventioners last winter. And Kodiak hosts each winter a commercial fishery trade show which draws over 4,000 people.

The winter tourism industry is dominated by small business operators and is currently patronized mostly by Alaskans. It is primarily the small business operators who lay the necessary groundwork for attracting additional winter visitors. A recent study conducted for the Municipality of Anchorage identified winter recreation as the key to stimulating that city's tourist industry during its traditionally slow winter season. Meanwhile, as the small winter business operators continue to see

Winter tourism industry dominated by small businesses

Revenues from Bed Taxes

Figure 5



increases in their client numbers, a handful of large projects are being proposed in Anchorage to further boost winter tourism.

Will the Olympics Torch Be Passed to Alaska?

Alaskans first contemplated making a bid for the international winter Olympics 32 years ago when George Beyers, then the mayor of Anchorage, traveled to Chicago to offer his city as a host for the 1960 Olympics. Mayor Beyers returned without making his pitch because he didn't think Anchorage was quite ready. It was years later, in 1984, when a number of Anchorage residents attended the winter Olympics in Sarajevo that the city was deemed ready to bid for future Olympic games.

recent report that tourist dollars expended in the state could be as high as \$1 billion eight years after the Olympics.

World-class Developers Eye Alaska Ski Slopes

Even without the prospect of the Olympics, Alaska's winter tourism industry has the potential of changing dramatically. It could go from an intrastate-dependent industry to one drawing mostly international travelers. It could go from an industry dominated by small independent operators to one dominated by international conglomerates. It would be the 1998 Olympics, however, that would provide the ultimate future backdrop for Alaska's winter tourism industry.

Winter Olympics: An economic jump start for winter tourism

Since then, Anchorage has offered unsuccessful bids for the 1992 and 1994 games. But city leaders proclaim that they plan to try again in 1991 for the 1998 Olympics.

Many believe the Olympics would 'jump start' an international winter tourism industry in Alaska. It's difficult to imagine that a world event of Olympic stature would not forever change the face of winter tourism in Alaska. New facilities would be built, and the worldwide exposure would be a dream come true for marketers of winter tourism in this state. An economic consulting firm, Economic Research Associates, was recently hired by the Anchorage Olympics Organizing Committee. The firm projected that 38,300 out-of-state travelers would attend the games in Anchorage. Approximately \$317 million would be expended, and more than 14,700 jobs would be created before and during the games. Although the year after such an event would be anticlimactic, cumulative effects on tourism would endure for years. Though there is no way the post-Olympic impact can be accurately projected, Economic Research Associates estimated in its

Anchorage's failed bids for the 1992 and 1994 Olympics did succeed, nevertheless, in catalyzing worldwide interest in Alaska as a potential destination for world-class ski/summer resorts. Indeed, two development firms are considering building two world-class, year-round resort complexes; and a third firm is planning on expanding an existing complex. If any one of these three developments moves forward as presently envisioned, winter tourism in the state will be forever changed. Following are brief descriptions of the three contemplated developments.

The most moderate proposal is the planned expansion of Girdwood's Alyeska Ski Resort. This facility is owned by the Japanese company Seibu Alaska, Inc. Alyeska is presently installing a new \$2.6 million detachable quad chair lift capable of moving more than twice as many people than it now moves. In addition, the company is also adding \$900,000 worth of snow-making equipment, trails, and other new features during this current ski season.

Future plans have Alyeska building a new 300-room hotel at the bottom of the mountain, along with a new 60-

passenger aerial tram, and additional chair lifts. The company also plans to double the size of the eating facilities located at the top of the mountain so that 350 people can be accommodated. Planned for next summer is the construction of roads, a sewer system, and the foundation for the hotel. Completion date for these improvements is late 1991. An estimated 150 jobs and \$3.1 million in payroll will be created with these projects if they are implemented. Phase two of Alyeska's expansion plans is on the drawing board. It includes more hotel space, more lifts, and additional facilities. No firm date has been set for the start or completion of this second phase.

Any comprehensive look at the Alyeska resort is incomplete without mentioning the potential development of Winner Creek Mountain. This mountain is located one mile northeast of the present Alyeska resort. Some skiing aficionados and the U.S. Forest Service believe that this mountain provides the greatest potential for major new downhill ski expansion. They believe this site would offer the best skiing because of its terrain, tree cover, size, snow, and views. And the site would complement the Alyeska resort. The two sites could be tied together providing skiers with the variety necessary to attract international business, ski team training, and competition. Throw in a golf course and other summer amenities, and it could become a major international summer/winter destination. (The potential of Winner Creek Mountain was addressed in a recently released Alyeska Resort Master Plan.)

The two new resorts being proposed are the Eagle Valley Resort by Robert Rogner of Austria, and the Hatcher Pass Alpine Ski Development by Mitsui & Company of Japan. Both of these proposals are ambitious, world-class, year-round resorts. Rogner has experience in resort developments; Mitsui is the second largest trading company in Japan. Many details remain preliminary, but the two development companies have provided enough information to provide a basic sketch.

The Eagle Valley Resort would be located in the vicinity of Eagle River, an Anchorage bedroom community located 10 miles north of that city's

downtown area. Plans call for building a resort village from scratch, which would include two first-class hotels with a total of 500 rooms, nine apartment-like buildings with 1,000 units, a convention center, and a Russian Orthodox church. Commercial space for restaurants, retail shops and other tourist facilities would also be available. An integrated lift system would be built to support a comfortable carrying capacity of 11,450 skiers. Cross-country skiing, sleigh rides, sledding and other winter activities would be offered. And a wide range of summer activities are also planned to ensure year-round patronage. When completed, it would employ 900 full-time and 300 part-time workers. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$230 million. The primary clientele is seen as coming from Europe, Asia, North America and Alaska. Because the Rogner group is requesting loan guarantees from the state, the state and the Rogner group have jointly hired a consulting firm. The firm is now conducting feasibility studies of an Eagle River Resort and of other possible resorts elsewhere in the state.

The other proposal, this one envisioned by Mitsui & Company, would be built at Hatcher Pass, a site located in the MatSu Borough 60 miles north of Anchorage. In March of this year Mitsui signed a 55-year lease with the state for 11,400 acres. The entire project calls for eight ski lifts, a gondola, a 300-room hotel and 900 condominiums. A golf course and other summer amenities are included, once again, to create a winter/summer resort. When all phases of the project are complete, Mitsui predicts that peak per-day traffic would be 750 out-of-state guests and 1,750 southcentral residents. Phase 1, scheduled to be finished by April 1993, would employ 344 people. When all phases are complete, Mitsui officials predict employment to reach 501. And University of Alaska officials estimate that additional spin-off development projects would create roughly 300 more jobs.

Are These Big Development Plans Feasible?

Many Alaskans question the feasibility of these development plans, considering their size. Alaskans have seen over the years many grandiose plans that never materialized.

Will any, all, or at least one of these resorts be built as presently envisioned? There is no real benchmark to use for Alaskans to make a clear judgment because no world-class resorts are now in place in this state. But there is a vast international ski market out there that only a few local residents understand. Some believe that more than 100,000 'skier visits' could be generated from Alaskans alone if more intermediate ski slopes were available. But even

Japanese skiers could be on Alaska slopes in one day

with this additional local patronage, there is a general consensus among many 'in the know' that all three developments could not turn a profit if they were all available for use simultaneously. So, which project is more feasible? A partial answer to this question might be provided by the joint feasibility study now being conducted for the state and Rogner group. Ultimately, the question will not be answered until a major financial commitment is made by one of the developers.

Compared with the other two proposed developments, Alyeska's plans are the most modest. Some of the expansion plans are already underway. But even with its Phase 1 expansion complete, the development would not fit the definition of a world-class resort.

There is a general consensus, again among many 'in the know', that until Alaska has a world-class ski resort the state will probably not put a dent in the international winter tourism market. Over and over again experts have said that without a first-class ski facility

equivalent to those found elsewhere in the world, the international ski market will simply fly over Alaska.

Will the Japanese be Alaska's Primary Winter Tourist?

Will the Japanese, Koreans, Europeans and North Americans patronize an Alaskan resort in significant numbers? Only international markets can support a world-class winter/summer resort developed by a Rogner or a Mitsui. Can Alaska compete with the resorts of Vail and Aspen in Colorado? With Whistler-Blackcomb in British Columbia? With European ski resorts? Or will the lore of Alaska's long, cold winter nights remain a major barrier? Theories abound. Let's explore a few of them.

Many believe the North American market is an unlikely source of jumbo jetloads of skiers bound for Alaska. The long trip in getting to this state, coupled with stiff competition from other resorts, may be barriers too great to overcome. But the same group of skeptics believes that Europe is off limits for the same reasons. Adventure-seeking tour groups departing from various locations in North America and Europe may be attracted, but these groups initially will not be large enough to support a world-scale resort.

However, Japan as a market is quite another story. On the one hand, just because Alyeska and Mitsui are Japanese-owned companies does not automatically guarantee a customer base from Japan. Underscoring this impression is the experience of Victoria Limited, the largest Japanese manufacturer of ski equipment. The company recently purchased Breckenridge Ski Resort in Colorado. Victoria Limited has no immediate plans to market the resort in Japan. Alyeska has been owned by Seibu for years and its customer base has remained strictly southcentral Alaska. On the other hand, however, these companies have a clearer understanding of the potential of the Japanese market. The companies have the business contacts. And equally important, the companies have the financial clout to exploit the potential market.

Alaska's arctic climate a marketing challenge

Further, a compelling advantage for the Japanese investors is Alaska's location relative to the Japanese market. Skiers from Japan could theoretically ski Alaska slopes on the same day they leave home. Alyeska and the other two proposed resorts are within 90 minutes' drive time of the Anchorage International Airport. With the exception of British Columbia, most of the international ski resorts require one or two full days' travel from Japan.

Another new development makes even more feasible an increasing Japanese presence in Alaska. The new Visa Waiver Pilot Program, which began in December, makes it easier for the Japanese to visit Alaska. Japanese travelers will no longer need visas to enter Alaska, and they will be allowed to stay up to 90 days.

Skiing is growing in popularity in Japan. The 1972 winter Olympics held in Sapporo undoubtedly helped boost interest in the sport. There are an estimated 10 million-plus skiers in the island nation. These skiers are believed to have not yet made a dent in the international market. According to Victoria Limited, only 10,000 Japanese travelled to North America or Europe last year for the primary purpose of skiing. Most of these skiers ended up in British Columbia, in Calgary Alberta, and in Europe. This could mean that there is a giant, untapped international market for Japanese skiers, or that there might be resistance among the Japanese to go international to ski.

Because Japan is now flush with cash, investors there have the financial wherewithal to make a large investment if the opportunity were right. As Alaska's largest foreign investor, Japan has had considerable experience with this state. For these and the other aforementioned reasons, if there is ever to be an international ski resort in Alaska its market will primarily be Japan and, eventually, other nations on the Pacific Rim.

Does the Weather Keep Visitors Away?

Will the lore of Alaska's long, cold, dark winter nights dash Alaska's ability to create a viable international winter tourist industry? Many contend that

Alaska's weather is a major stumbling block to virtually all economic development in the state, not just to winter tourism. The Alaska Division of Tourism is constantly fighting Alaska's image of the "land of snow and ice." They believe that this damaging image remains a major barrier for all tourism in the state. The recent international media coverage of the ice-trapped whales near Barrow might have reinforced this erroneous image of Alaska.

Most people in the tourism industry regard Alaska's arctic climate as a marketing problem, but conclude that it can be surmounted and even used to the industry's advantage. The tough months to sell are between November and February. Optimists argue that there is plenty of natural light even during these mid-winter months. There is enough natural light, they contend, for the rapidly moving lifts to allow the average skier his usual five hours' time on the slopes. The optimists also point out that Alaska has, at the very least, a six-month skiing season. That length of time compares favorably to most other locations, which average only four months.

Other observers of Alaska's winter tourism industry have focused their marketing ideas on the spring skiing months — between late February and May. The weather is milder then, and the days are longer. Additional spring attractions for Alaska tourists are, for example, the Iditarod, the Fur Rendezvous, the Yukon Quest, and the Fairbanks Ice Festival. And during the latter part of the winter ski season, tourists' skiing experiences could be complemented by yet other activities, such as rafting, hiking and fishing.

Summer snow-skiing offers additional potential. While it is still a small industry, it has become quite popular in recent years at Mount Bachelor and Mount Hood in Oregon. Alaska's potential for this niche of the market is almost limitless because glaciers are required. Winner Creek, for example, offers fine summer skiing opportunities. This year, a new training center facility was built at Eagle Glacier, providing the world's lowest altitude, on-snow site for summer biathlon and nordic ski training.

Winter Tourism Without Big Resorts: Gradual Instead of Rapid Growth

What will happen to the winter tourism industry without any of these major developments? It will grow slowly at best, and the source of its growth will come from increasing local demand.

Some people envision networks of snow trails that could be travelled via cross-country skis, snow machine, and dog sled. The trails would be connected by huts and lodges. Some lodges already offer downhill skiing, a feature which allows them to exploit other future development possibilities. Much of the snow trails and lodge infrastructure is already in place. In many cases, coordination may be the only thing needed to complete a comprehensive network. As far as the marketability of this type of development, international customers and investors could be attracted. Norway and other countries have similar developments which draw a mixed local and international crowd. This type of development is an evolutionary one, occurring over a span longer than three or four years.

Despite the state's current poor economic climate, recent trends appear to justify increased development of winter recreational facilities. The demand on the Hatcher Pass facilities continues to grow. And the Willow Creek Ski Association of Fairbanks plans to develop a new alpine ski site on Ester Dome. This development is aimed at the regional market.

There are plans to develop more land in Denali State Park — South Denali — that would offer even more winter recreational opportunities. Developing the park would provide more access to visitors and would relieve the growing pressure on the park's summer season. Possible development of South Denali would also offer a variety of winter sports opportunities, particularly for accommodating the growing popularity of cross-country skiing. The park, accessible by road and train, offers extraordinary views of the Alaska Range.

An increasing number of communities in the state are promoting their towns as destinations for the winter months, as well as the summer. This marketing effort should give rise to additional winter recreational opportunities in the communities. In many of these Alaskan communities, individual investors are laying plans for the development of small scale resorts, again aimed at the winter recreational user.

Is There Change in the Wind?

Today, Alaska's winter tourism industry caters largely to Alaskans. Many of the current winter events and recreational opportunities are regionally oriented, catering only to the local area residents. A sizeable winter tourism industry is in

Recent trends might justify further development of winter recreational facilities

place in this state primarily because Alaskans make more time for play in the winter months than do other Americans elsewhere in the U.S.

Indeed, Alaska does attract nonresident winter tourists, but their primary purpose in this state is oriented toward conducting business in Alaska or toward visiting relatives. Few visitors come to exclusively avail themselves of this state's winter recreation facilities.

If any of the aforementioned developers' plans discussed earlier in this article actually materialize in the not-too-distant future, increasing numbers of nonresident winter tourists would be wooed here. The primary reason for many of the winter tourists' visits to Alaska would then be to take advantage of the winter recreational opportunities.

If, on the other hand, these large developments do not pan out, further development of the winter tourism industry will surely occur, but it will evolve much more slowly.

About the Author:

Neal Fried is a labor economist employed for 10 years with the Research & Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. He is based in Anchorage.

Holly Stinson is a labor economist employed for three months with the same Anchorage office.

Alaska's Native Population: An Updated Profile

By Greg Williams

Native & Non-Native Population Estimates, 1980-87:

This article presents population estimates for Alaska's major racial groups for the years 1980 through 1987.

**The proportion
of non-Natives
dropped 2.8%
between
1980 & 1987**

Until now, the most recent racial statistics for Alaska have been from the 1980 census. There has since been a need for more current population estimates for the major racial groups in Alaska — Native, White and 'other.'

(For readers who want additional information on the topic, these estimates will also be included in *Alaska Population Overview: 1986 and Provisional 1987 Estimates*. This Department of Labor publication will be published in early 1989.)

Since there are few current indicators which reflect race, the estimates produced here reflect a mixture of current and historical trend data.

Throughout most of Alaska's history there has been little reliable data on Alaska Natives. This was particularly true before the 1929 Territorial Census. In 1929 there were some 29,983 Alaska Natives in Alaska. They made up 50.6% of Alaska's population. While their numbers have grown rapidly since 1929, they have not grown as fast as the non-Native population; the proportion of Alaska Natives has declined steadily over time.

The 1980 census showed that 92,123 Alaskans — or 22.9% of the state's population — considered themselves to be some race other than White. The number and proportions of persons by race and tribal group in 1980 are listed in Table 2.

Table 1

Total and Native Alaska Population, 1929-1987

Year	Native Population	% Native	Total Population
1929	29,983	50.6	59,278
1939	32,458	44.8	72,524
1950	33,863	26.3	128,643
1960	42,522	18.8	226,167
1970	50,605	16.8	203,583
1980	64,103	16.0	401,851
1987	78,600	14.6	537,800

Source: U.S. Census and Alaska Department of Labor

In 1987 there were an estimated 537,800 people in Alaska. Of these, Native Americans made up 78,600. (For the sake of clarity, all Native Americans living in Alaska will be referred to in these estimates as Alaska Natives; it is pertinent to note, however, that 0.8% of the Native Americans living in Alaska belong to continental United States tribal groups.)

Approximately one-half of the Alaska Native Americans who hail from tribes of the Lower '48 were born in Alaska. Conversely, approximately 20,000 Alaska Natives, or 20% of all Alaska Natives, are estimated to be living outside of this state.

Because of the economic boom of the early 1980's, which brought many non-Natives to Alaska, the proportion of Alaska Natives to non-Natives dropped from 16% in 1980 to 14.8% in 1987.

The Alaska White population accounted for 418,700 persons — 77.9% — in 1987. Other races, primarily Asian, Pacific Islanders and Blacks, accounted for 40,500 persons — 7.5% — of the 1987 population. These groups of 'other races' are up from 27,521 — or 6.9% — in 1980.

The Black population of Alaska is primarily employed by the military. The number of Blacks living in Alaska during 1987 were very uncertain. Equally uncertain was the size of the Asian population of Alaska. But it is known that there has been a substantial Asian immigration to Alaska during this decade. In 1986 alone some 1,115 immigrants were admitted to Alaska. Fifty-nine percent of these were from Asian countries, and 52% were from the Phillipines and Korea. This immigration may be reflected in a disproportionate growth for Asian and Pacific Islanders. Based on the historic pattern of immigration of Asians, coupled with the estimated births and deaths of Blacks and Asians in Alaska, a crude estimate of the number of these minorities living in the state in 1987 is: 16,400 Blacks (3.0%), and 13,100 Asian and Pacific Islanders (2.4%).

Natives of working age support more household members

Population estimates for Alaska by age, race and sex are presented in Tables 3 and 4 for 1980 and 1987, respectively. Figure 1 shows Alaska's 1987 population by age, race and sex. Figure 2 compares the percentage distribution of Alaska's Native and White populations.

While Alaska Natives currently make up 14.6% of Alaska's total population, they represent far more of the population in certain specific age groups. For instance, Table 4 shows that 21.5% of the Alaska population under age 5 is Native. And Natives make up 18.6% of the state's population who are over age 65.

The approximate total population between ages 5 and 13 — those persons of elementary and junior high school age — is 78,700. This group is composed of: 73.3% White, 18.4% Alaska Native, and 8.3% other races. The approximate total population of high school-age children between the ages of 14 and 17

is 31,300. This group is composed of: 74.6% White, 17.6% Alaska Native, and 7.8% other races. (See Table 4.)

There are approximately 19,200 elderly in the state. They are: 76.8% White, 18.6% Alaska Native, and 4.6% other races. (Again, see Table 4.)

There is a significant disparity between the age of Alaska Natives compared to non-Natives. Alaska Natives make up 49,420 — or only 12.8% — of the state's working age population. Further, Natives make up 46,575 — or only 12.5% — of the state's 18-plus voting age population. This difference in the age structure places a large burden on Alaska Natives of working age. This difference means that for every 100 Native persons of working age (18 and over), there are 74.5 youth and 8.3 elderly persons to be supported. In contrast, for every 100 White Alaskans in the working ages (18 and over), there are only 43.1 youth and 5.2 elderly persons to be supported. Additionally significant is the fact that the average income in the more heavily Native census areas of the state have not grown at the same rate as the more White urban areas of the state. Thus, Alaska

Alaskan Blacks primarily employed by military

Table 2

Population by Race and Tribal Group, 1980

Total	401,851	(100.0%)
White	309,728	(77.0%)
Native American	64,103	(16.0%)
Eskimo	34,144	(8.5%)
Inupiaq	14,539	(3.6%)*
Yupik	19,604	(4.9%)*
American Indian	21,869	(5.4%)
Athabaskan	9,300	(2.3%)*
Tlingit	7,192	(1.8%)*
Haida	1,011	(0.3%)*
Tsimshian	1,208	(0.3%)*
Other North American tribes	3,157	(0.8%)*
Aleut	8,090	(2.0%)
Other races	27,521	(6.9%)
Black	13,144	(3.3%)
Asian and Pacific Islanders	8,054	(2.0%)
Other and unknown races	6,323	(1.6%)

Sources: 1980 Census of Population, and Housing and special U.S. Census tabulations.

* Alaska Department of Labor estimate based on adjustment of U.S. Census data.

Table 3

Alaska Population by Age, Race, and Sex: April 1, 1980

Age	Total April 1, 1980			White April 1, 1980				Alaska Native April 1, 1980			
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	% of Age Group	Total	Male	Female	% of Age Group
0-4	38,949	20,040	18,909	28,216	14,530	13,686	72.4	7,320	3,780	3,540	18.8
5-9	35,043	17,943	17,100	25,373	13,046	12,327	72.4	6,867	3,477	3,390	19.6
10-14	34,282	17,720	16,562	24,662	12,798	11,864	71.9	7,495	3,857	3,638	21.9
15-19	37,154	19,819	17,335	26,453	14,270	12,183	71.2	8,346	4,255	4,091	22.5
20-24	45,090	24,186	20,904	34,170	18,317	15,853	75.8	6,899	3,454	3,445	15.3
25-29	48,645	25,564	23,081	39,000	20,534	18,466	80.2	5,639	2,841	2,798	11.6
30-34	42,163	22,676	19,487	34,879	18,966	15,913	82.7	4,373	2,194	2,179	10.4
35-39	31,316	17,077	14,239	25,993	14,359	11,634	83.0	3,458	1,739	1,719	11.0
40-44	22,706	12,484	10,222	18,470	10,304	8,166	81.3	2,883	1,473	1,410	12.7
45-49	18,404	9,982	8,422	14,793	8,154	6,639	80.4	2,654	1,354	1,300	14.4
50-54	15,839	8,711	7,128	12,903	7,247	5,656	81.5	2,179	1,104	1,075	13.8
55-59	12,617	6,777	5,840	10,237	5,534	4,703	81.1	1,802	945	857	14.3
60-64	8,096	4,303	3,793	6,442	3,510	2,932	79.6	1,307	628	679	16.1
65-69	5,206	2,740	2,466	3,773	2,008	1,765	72.5	1,198	599	599	23.0
70-74	3,106	1,538	1,568	2,187	1,057	1,130	70.4	764	389	375	24.6
75-79	1,845	883	962	1,241	573	668	67.3	522	264	258	28.3
80-84	771	351	420	525	236	289	68.1	209	96	113	27.1
85+	619	247	372	411	146	265	66.4	188	93	95	30.4
Total	401,851	213,041	188,810	309,728	165,589	144,139	77.1	64,103	32,542	31,561	16.0
Selected Ages											
5-13	62,363	31,970	30,393	45,230	23,304	21,926	72.5	12,630	6,409	6,221	20.3
14-17	29,433	15,507	13,926	20,732	10,971	9,761	70.4	6,992	3,642	3,350	23.8
18-24	59,773	32,191	27,582	44,696	24,156	20,540	74.8	9,985	4,992	4,993	16.7
16+	286,197	153,514	132,683	226,296	122,528	103,768	79.1	40,668	20,514	20,154	14.2
18+	271,106	145,524	125,582	215,550	116,784	98,766	79.5	37,161	18,711	18,450	13.7
65+	11,547	5,759	5,788	8,137	4,020	4,117	70.5	2,881	1,441	1,440	25.0
Media Age	26.0	26.3	25.7	27.0	27.4	26.6		21.4	21.3	21.5	
U.S. Median Age	30.0	28.8	31.3	30.9	29.6	32.3		N/A	N/A	N/A	

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis, Demographics
U.S. Bureau of the Census

Natives' birth rate high

Natives must make scarce resources go even farther.

With regard to Alaska female numbers: In 1987 females made up 47.7% of Alaska's White population and 49.8% of Alaska's Native population. In that same year, females made up 51.2% of the U.S. population.

Components of Change: Native Births Remain High; Movement Low

While there has historically been a large migration flow of Alaska Natives to and from the state each year, these flows have been pretty well balanced. The net effect produces an almost negligible gain or loss of Alaska Natives each year due to migration.

Almost all the growth in the Alaska Native population in recent years has been due to natural increase. Birth rates among Alaska Natives are currently very high. In 1987 the birth rate for Alaska Natives was 32.6 per 1,000; the death rate in that same year was 6.7 per 1,000; together, these rates made for a natural increase of 2.6% per year. In 1970 the average number of children for Alaska Native families was 4.5. In 1976 the number declined to a low of 2.7. Since then the numbers have been slowly rising each year. Currently, the average number of children for Alaska Natives is 3.57.

In contrast, the birth rate for White Alaskans in 1987 was 19.6 per 1,000; the death rate was 3.4 per 1,000; together, this made for a natural

Table 4

Alaska Population Estimates by Age, Race and Sex, 1987

Age	Total Estimate			White Estimate				Alaska Native Estimate			
	July 1, 1987			July 1, 1987			% of Age Group	July 1, 1987			% of Age Group
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female	
0-4	56,288	29,037	27,251	40,672	21,033	19,639	72.3	12,085	6,183	5,902	21.5
5-9	47,807	24,890	22,917	35,061	18,259	16,802	73.3	8,899	4,622	4,277	18.6
10-14	38,674	19,849	18,825	28,382	14,625	13,757	73.4	6,884	3,519	3,365	17.8
15-19	38,204	20,163	18,041	28,547	15,221	13,326	74.7	6,881	3,488	3,393	18.0
20-24	47,928	25,723	22,205	36,141	19,533	16,608	75.4	8,309	4,264	4,045	17.3
25-29	60,839	31,647	29,192	47,621	24,758	22,863	78.3	7,329	3,495	3,834	12.0
30-34	62,595	31,748	30,847	50,441	25,595	24,846	80.6	6,462	3,087	3,375	10.3
35-39	54,032	28,275	25,757	44,726	23,553	21,173	82.8	5,003	2,472	2,531	9.3
40-44	37,473	20,098	17,375	31,494	17,071	14,423	84.0	3,547	1,771	1,776	9.5
45-49	26,640	14,451	12,189	22,019	12,065	9,954	82.7	2,921	1,504	1,417	11.0
50-54	19,562	10,399	9,163	15,802	8,544	7,258	80.8	2,646	1,317	1,329	13.5
55-59	16,054	8,524	7,530	12,974	7,017	5,957	80.8	2,263	1,131	1,132	14.1
60-64	12,511	6,379	6,132	10,084	5,163	4,921	80.6	1,801	919	882	14.4
65-69	8,302	3,956	4,346	6,686	3,178	3,508	80.5	1,277	640	637	15.4
70-74	5,032	2,294	2,738	3,879	1,762	2,117	77.1	961	460	501	19.1
75-79	3,201	1,538	1,663	2,278	1,082	1,196	71.2	716	329	387	22.4
80-84	1,553	672	881	1,076	446	630	69.3	401	179	222	25.8
85 +	1,105	264	841	817	152	665	73.9	215	95	120	19.5
Total	537,800	279,907	257,893	418,700	219,057	199,643	77.9	78,600	39,475	39,125	14.6
Selected Ages											
5-13	78,719	40,776	37,943	57,693	29,945	27,748	73.3	14,448	7,458	6,990	18.4
14-17	31,287	16,260	15,027	23,339	12,210	11,129	74.6	5,492	2,789	2,703	17.6
18-24	62,607	33,589	29,018	47,099	25,483	21,616	75.2	11,033	5,646	5,387	17.6
16 +	387,164	202,055	185,109	308,681	162,078	146,603	79.7	49,420	24,479	24,941	12.8
18 +	371,506	193,834	177,672	296,996	155,869	141,127	79.9	46,575	23,045	23,530	12.5
65 +	19,193	8,724	10,469	14,736	6,620	8,116	76.8	3,570	1,703	1,867	18.6

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Demographics, 11/16/88

increase of 1.6%. The average number of White Alaskan children in 1987 was 2.07. The size of White families in Alaska has been about the same since the mid-1970's.

Nationwide, the birth rate is 16 per 1,000 and the death rate is 9 per 1,000, making for a natural increase of .7%. The average number of children per U.S. family in 1987, as reflected by the total fertility rate, was 1.87. This number was 3.7 at the height of the baby boom; since about 1987 it has been about 1.7-to-1.8.

Alaska's population is younger than the nation's. Further, Alaska's Native population is much younger than the Alaska White population because of the Natives' high fertility rate. The following data attests to this: The 1987

median age for the U.S. was 31.8 for White males and 34.2 for White females. The '87 median age for Alaska was 29.2 for White males and 29.3 for White females. By contrast, the 1987 median age for Alaska Native males was 22.3, and the median age for Alaska Native females was 23.3 years.

The difference in the distribution of the White and Alaska Native populations can be seen in Figure 2. The reader can clearly see the effect of high fertility in the Alaska Native population, as well as the large numbers of White Alaskans ages 20-to-40 (represented by the large bulge in the diagram).

**Alaskans
are younger**

Since statistics on migration by race do not exist, a mixture of current and historic trend data has been used to generate the race estimates for labor market regions, borough and census areas, and Alaska Native regional corporations.

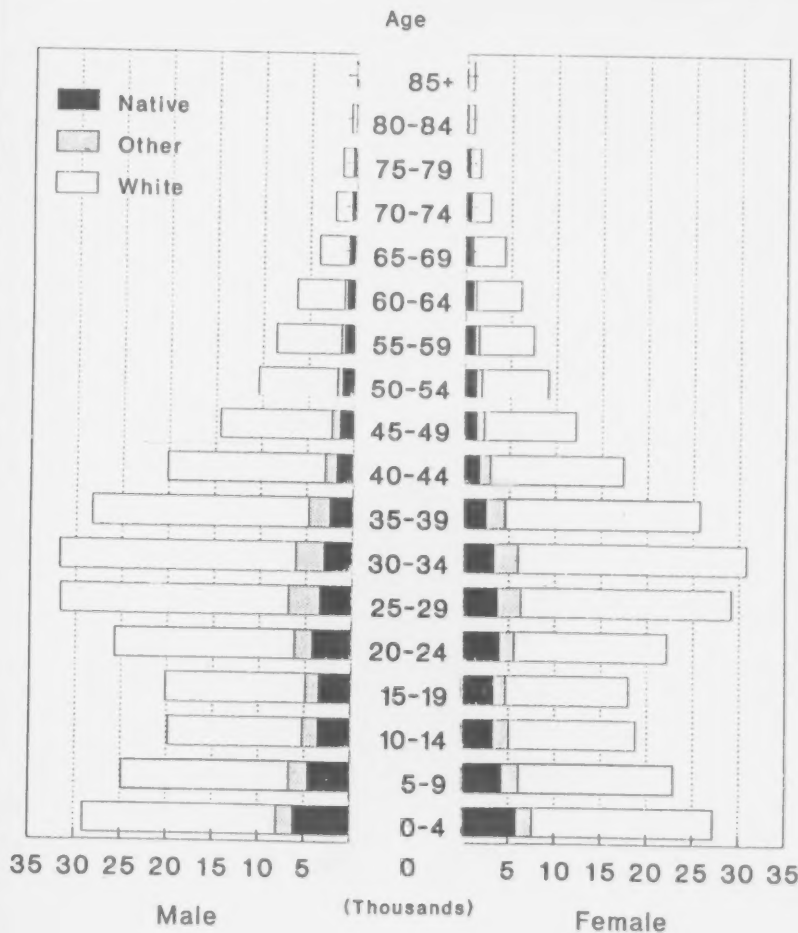
In the case of Anchorage the proportion of Natives are reported using Anchorage city planning department survey results, which asked race of a large sample of persons. Since place estimates are currently complete only for 1986, the geographic distribution numbers for Alaska Natives is current for 1986 only. State estimates, however,

are current for 1987. And while estimates are shown to the last digit, it should not be assumed that they are accurate to that level.

Table 5 shows that Alaska Natives have increased in numbers in all boroughs and census areas since 1980. The largest numerical increases have occurred in the Municipality of Anchorage (up 2,445), Bethel Census Area (up 1,459), Nome Census Area (up 927), Fairbanks North Star Borough (up 895), Dillingham Census Area (up 740), Northwest Arctic Borough (up 735), Wade Hampton Census Area (up 735), and the North Slope Borough (up 706).

Figure 1

Alaska Population By Age, Race & Sex - 1987



Alaska Department
of Labor, 1988.

More Alaska Natives now live in Anchorage (11,398) than in any other borough or census area. The Bethel Census Area, which had in 1980 the largest number of Alaska Natives, dropped to second place in 1986 with a population number of 10,706.

Yet, between 1980 and 1986, the number of Alaska Natives declined as a proportion of the population in almost every census area. Only in the Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon, Sitka, Bristol Bay, and Southeast Fairbanks census areas did the proportion of Natives increase.

In 1986, 39,854 — or 50.7% — of all Alaska Natives still lived largely in Native census areas where Natives make up more than one-half of the population. This is a slight decline from 1980 when this percentage was 53.0. At the other extreme, 18,724 (23.8%) Alaska Natives lived in census areas with a Native population of less than 6%. That's an increase of 1.4% over 1980 when only 22.4% of the Native population lived in these areas.

Geographically, the Alaska Native population has shown relatively small re-distribution since 1980. In 1980 15% of the Alaska Native population lived in the Anchorage labor market area; by 1986 that proportion had risen to 16.3%.

Slight proportional increases were also seen in the Gulf Coast and Interior regions. Specifically, there have been relative gains among Alaska Natives in: the Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kenai Borough, Fairbanks-North Star Borough, Southeast Fairbanks Census Area, North Slope Borough, and the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area.

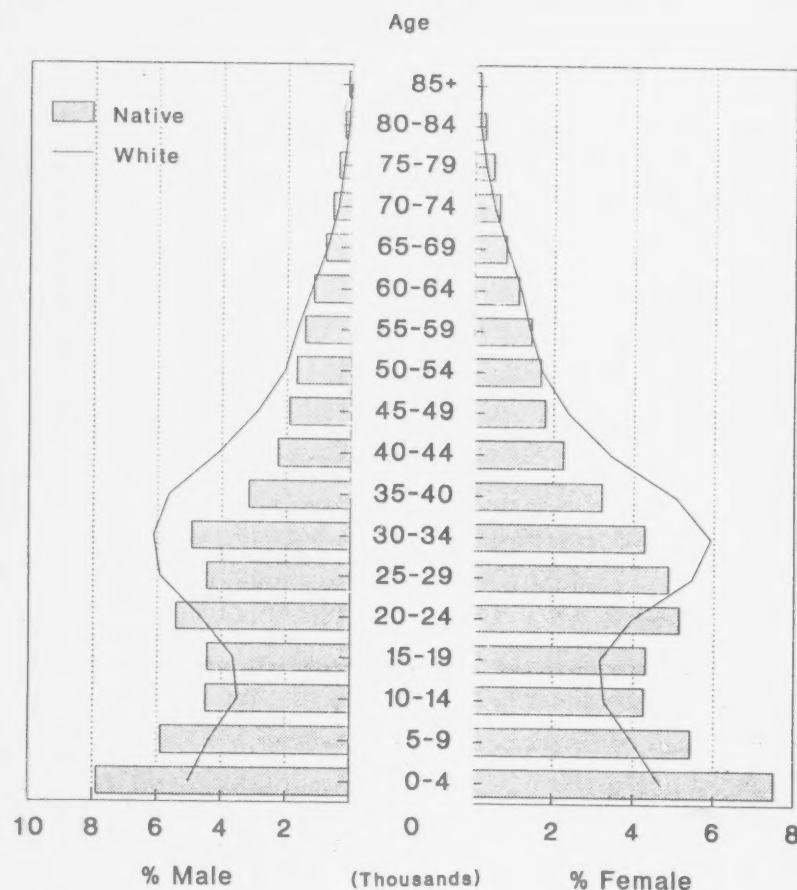
The proportion of the state's total Native population declined in all other regions and census areas. In part, the changing geographic distribution reflects a gradual expected movement of Alaska Natives from small rural Native villages to larger — mainly White — urban centers. It is significant that the numbers of Natives moving to urban areas remained relatively low during this period of overall rapid urban growth. These relatively small changes support the strong desire of many Alaska Natives to retain traditional styles of life.

The 12 Alaska Native regional corporations include all areas of the state except the Annette Island Reserve. The total estimated number of Alaska Natives living within the geographic areas held by the regional corporations are shown in Table 5. The estimates of Native population living within these regions do not necessarily represent shareholder numbers of that corporation.

There has been little change in the distribution of the Alaska Native population within the different corporate regions. An increase in the proportion of Natives living inside the Cook Inlet region is a result of the growth of the proportion of Natives living in Anchorage. The numbers of Alaska Natives living in the Calista and Sealaska regions have declined slightly.

Figure 2

Alaska Native & White Population Percent Distribution by Age & Sex - 1987



Alaska Department
Of Labor, 1988.

Table 5

Borough and Census Area Population by Race and Labor Market Area, 1980 & 1986

	July 1 1986 Estimates	July 1 1986 Estimates	July 1 1986 % Alaska Native	July 1 1986 Alaska Native as a % of State Total	April 1 1980 Census	April 1 1980 Census	April 1 1980 % Alaska Native	April 1 1980 Alaska Native as a % of State Total	Change in % Alaska Native 1980-86	Change in % Alaska Native 1980-86	Change in Geographical Distribution Alaska Native 1980-86
The State of Alaska	547,600	76,900	14.0	100.0	401,851	64,103	16.0	100.0	12,797	-1.9	0.0
Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna Region	275,781	12,512	4.5	16.3	192,247	9,641	5.0	15.0	2,871	-0.5	1.2
Anchorage Borough	236,934	11,398	4.8	14.8	174,431	8,953	5.1	14.0	2,445	-0.3	0.9
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	38,847	1,114	2.9	1.4	17,816	688	3.9	1.1	426	-1.0	0.4
Gulf Coast Region	62,805	5,699	9.1	7.4	43,569	4,682	10.7	7.3	1,017	-1.7	0.1
Kenai Peninsula Borough	40,414	2,330	5.8	3.0	25,282	1,738	6.9	2.7	592	-1.1	0.3
Kodiak Island Borough	13,561	2,264	16.7	2.9	9,939	1,884	19.0	2.9	380	-2.3	0.0
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	8,830	1,105	12.5	1.4	8,348	1,060	12.7	1.7	45	-0.2	-0.2
Interior Region	89,715	9,738	10.9	12.7	67,532	8,078	12.0	12.6	1,660	-1.1	0.1
Fairbanks-Northstar Borough	73,540	3,882	5.3	5.0	53,983	2,987	5.5	4.7	895	-0.3	0.4
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	6,822	930	13.6	1.2	5,676	725	12.8	1.1	205	0.9	0.1
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	9,353	4,926	52.7	6.4	7,873	4,366	55.5	6.8	560	-2.8	-0.4
Northern Region	19,441	14,880	76.5	19.3	15,567	12,512	80.4	19.5	2,368	-3.8	-0.2
Nome Census Area	7,911	6,101	77.1	7.9	6,537	5,174	79.1	8.1	927	-2.0	-0.1
North Slope Borough	5,520	3,931	71.2	5.1	4,199	3,225	76.8	5.0	706	-5.6	0.1
Northwest Arctic Borough	6,010	4,848	80.7	6.3	4,831	4,113	85.1	6.4	735	-4.5	-0.1
Southeast Region	64,437	11,303	17.5	14.7	53,794	9,782	18.2	15.3	1,521	-0.6	-0.6
Haines Borough	1,881	240	12.8	0.3	1,680	214	12.7	0.3	26	0.0	-0.0
Juneau Borough	26,422	2,642	10.0	3.4	19,528	2,190	11.2	3.4	452	-1.2	0.0
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	12,436	1,467	11.8	1.9	11,316	1,406	12.4	2.2	61	-0.6	-0.3
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan C.A.	5,023	2,151	42.8	2.8	3,822	1,651	43.2	2.6	500	-0.4	0.2
Sitka Census Area	8,102	1,823	22.5	2.4	7,803	1,669	21.4	2.6	154	1.1	-0.2
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon Census Area	3,784	1,684	44.5	2.2	3,478	1,462	42.0	2.3	222	2.5	-0.1
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	6,789	1,296	19.1	1.7	6,167	1,190	19.3	1.9	106	-0.2	-0.2
Southwest Region	35,421	22,768	64.3	29.6	29,142	19,408	66.6	30.3	3,360	-2.3	-0.7
Aleutian Islands Census Area	9,296	2,280	24.5	3.0	7,768	1,934	24.9	3.0	346	-0.4	-0.1
Bethel Census Area	13,163	10,706	81.3	13.9	10,999	9,247	84.1	14.4	1,459	-2.7	-0.5
Bristol Bay Borough	1,297	440	33.9	0.6	1,094	360	32.9	0.6	80	1.0	0.0
Dillingham Census Area	5,950	4,260	71.6	5.5	4,616	3,520	76.3	5.5	740	-4.7	0.0
Wade Hampton Census Area	5,715	5,082	88.9	6.6	4,665	4,347	93.2	6.8	735	-4.3	-0.2

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Demographics, 11/16/88

About the Author:

Greg Williams is a demographer employed 4 1/2 years with the Research & Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor, Juneau office.

Numerically, the largest growth in Native population within the corporate regions has occurred in Cook Inlet (up 3,370), Calista (up 2,194), Doyon (up 1,645) and Sealaska (up 1,645). The remaining regions grew by less than 1,000 each between 1980 and 1986.

Proportion of Native Population Continues to Decline

While the number of Alaska Natives have increased significantly between 1980 and 1987, their proportion of the state's population continues to decline because of the large immigration of non-Natives to Alaska. With the exception of a small rural-to-urban movement, the geographic distribution of the Native population has remained relatively stable. These trends may well continue over the next few years.

Table 6

Persons by Race Within Alaska Native Regional Corporations, 1980 & 1986

	July 1 1986 Estimates	July 1 1986 Estimates	July 1 1986 Estimates	July 1 1986 Alaska Native as a % of State Total	April 1 1980 Census	April 1 1980 Census	April 1 1980 Census	April 1 1980 Alaska Native as a % of State Total	Change in % Alaska Native 1980-86	Change in % Alaska Native 1980-86	Change in Geographical Distribution Alaska Native 1980-86
	Total Population	Alaska Native	Alaska Native	%	Total Population	Alaska Native	Alaska Native	%			
Alaska	547,600	76,900	14.0	100.0	401,851	64,103	16.0	100.0	12,797	-1.9	0
Alaska Native Regional Corporations*	546,059	75,634	13.9	98.4	400,656	63,145	15.8	98.5	12,489	-1.9	-0.2
AHTNA Incorporated	2,997	557	18.6	0.7	2,956	549	18.6	0.9	8	0.0	-0.1
Aleut Corporation	9,296	2,280	24.5	3.0	7,768	1,934	24.9	3.0	346	-0.4	-0.1
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation	5,520	3,931	71.2	5.1	4,199	3,225	76.8	5.0	706	-5.6	0.1
Bering Straits Native Corporation	7,911	6,101	77.1	7.9	6,537	5,174	79.1	8.1	927	-2.0	-0.1
Bristol Bay Native Corporation	7,247	4,700	64.9	6.1	5,688	3,874	68.1	6.0	826	-3.3	0.1
Calista Corporation	18,878	15,788	83.6	20.5	15,664	13,594	86.8	21.2	2,194	-3.2	-0.7
Chugach Natives Incorporated	8,872	1,211	13.6	1.6	8,436	1,072	12.7	1.7	139	0.9	-0.1
Cook Inlet Regional Corporation	313,385	14,224	4.5	18.5	214,634	10,854	5.1	16.9	3,370	-0.5	1.6
Doyon Limited	89,486	9,693	10.8	12.6	67,405	8,048	11.9	12.6	1,645	-1.1	0
Koniag Incorporated	13,561	2,264	16.7	2.9	9,939	1,884	19.0	2.9	380	-2.3	0
NANA Regional Corporation	6,010	4,848	80.7	6.3	4,831	4,113	85.1	6.4	735	-4.5	-0.1
Sealaska Corporation	62,896	10,037	16.0	13.1	52,599	8,824	16.8	13.8	1,213	-0.8	-0.7

Source: Alaska Department of Labor Research & Analysis 11/15/88

* Excludes Annette Island Reserve

October Figures Show Rebound Continuing

October indicators of Alaska's economic health continued to point to a revival of Alaska's overall economy. For the second month in a row, Alaska's total nonagricultural wage and salary employment showed an increased level of employment from one year ago. (See Table 1.)

October 1988 Industry Employment and Unemployment:

Employment in October was at or below September levels in all of the private sector. This was not unexpected. If employment levels follow historic patterns they will continue to drop through January. The largest overall employment losses were in seafood processing, retail trade, and in services. Seafood processing was the largest percentage loser with a 28% decline in employment.

Comparisons with October 1987 employment levels show increases nearly across the board. At the major industry levels, only the Finance-Insurance & Real Estate (FIRE) and construction industries posted losses of 300 and 1,900 jobs, respectively. These losses mean in percentage terms that FIRE employment fell by 2.9% and construction employment fell by 15.9%. While most industries seem to have bottomed out, construction has not found a sustainable employment level after the most recent construction bust.

Table 1

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Alaska**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	211,800	218,600	211,700	-6,800	100
Mining	8,800	9,100	8,800	-300	0
Construction	10,000	11,000	11,900	-1,000	-1,900
Manufacturing	13,300	15,800	13,000	-2,500	300
Seafood Processing	6,500	9,000	6,400	-2,500	100
Lumber & Paper Prod.	3,600	3,600	3,300	0	300
All Other Manufacturing	3,200	3,200	3,300	0	-100
Transportation	17,800	18,600	17,800	-800	0
Trucking & Warehousing	2,500	2,600	2,500	-100	0
Water Transportation	1,000	1,100	1,000	-100	0
Air Transportation	5,500	5,600	5,300	-100	200
All Other Transportation	8,800	9,300	9,000	-500	-200
Trade	42,000	43,400	41,800	-1,400	200
Wholesale	7,300	7,500	7,300	-200	0
Retail	34,700	35,900	34,500	-1,200	200
Gen. Mer. & Apparel	5,100	5,100	5,100	0	0
Food Stores	6,100	6,300	6,000	-200	100
Eating & Drinking Pl.	12,500	13,400	12,400	-900	100
All Other Retail	11,000	11,100	11,000	-100	0
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	10,600	10,800	10,900	-200	-300
Services	41,500	42,700	40,800	-1,200	700
Government	67,800	67,200	66,700	600	1,100
Federal	18,000	18,300	18,400	-300	-400
State	20,700	20,500	19,500	200	1,200
Local	29,100	28,400	28,800	700	300

Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark Date March 1987.

p/ Denotes Preliminary Estimates.

r/ Denotes Revised Estimates.

Since total employment increased by 100 over the year, other industries posted enough employment gains to offset these losses. The largest gains came from the public sector, where declines in federal government employment were more than offset by increases in state and local government. An over-the-month rise of 700 jobs in local government is attributable to additional educational employment as local noneducational payrolls contracted.

Manufacturing picked up 300 jobs over the year — 100 in seafood processing and 300 in lumber and paper products, and lost 100 jobs in other manufacturing. This was the strongest percentage increase of any major industry, up 2.8% from levels of one year ago. Services posted the largest over-the-year gain in employment for any private sector industry, with levels 700 above those of 1987. At 1.7%, this was also the second highest private

sector percentage increase. Trade employment increased by 200 over the year; all of this rise is attributable to the retail sector. Interestingly, these major industries showing the largest over-the-year increases contain those sectors which posted the largest over-the-month losses.

Along with falling employment levels came an increase in the unemployment rate, which registered 8.4% in October. (See Table 4.) This is 0.8 percentage points below last year, with 2,750 fewer Alaskans considered unemployed. The state's labor force has seen even larger reductions, down nearly 10,000 since October 1987.

October 1988 Regional Employment and Unemployment:

The Northern region bucked the trend of rising unemployment rates by falling from 8% in September to 7.8% in October. Much of this change can be attributed to a labor force falling more quickly than the level of employment.

The lowest unemployment rate was in the Southwest region. The 6.2% rate compares with a 7.9% rate of one year ago. Over the past year, gains were mainly made in government employment, with a small rise in seafood processing. Most other sectors posted over-the-year losses. Southeast saw a healthy 5% increase in employment over that of one year ago. Although most sectors showed over-the-year increases, the separate states of health of the timber and construction industries were readily apparent in the employment estimates. Timber employment increased by over 10% for the year, while construction decreased by a near equal amount.

The construction industry also was a big loser in the Anchorage-MatSu region. There are over 1,300 fewer people employed in this industry than there were at this time last year. Most other industries have, at the very least, stabilized. Several are showing over-the-year growth.

Table 2

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

Anchorage

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	101,600	102,400	101,300	-800	300
Mining	3,650	3,650	3,300	0	350
Construction	4,900	5,350	6,300	-450	-1,400
Manufacturing	2,250	2,450	2,200	-200	50
Transportation	9,600	9,800	9,550	-200	50
Trucking & Warehousing	1,650	1,700	1,500	-50	150
Water Transportation	300	300	300	0	0
Air Transportation	3,300	3,300	3,200	0	100
All Other Transportation	4,350	4,500	4,550	-150	-200
Trade	24,150	24,000	23,650	150	500
Wholesale	5,500	5,550	5,300	-50	200
Retail	18,650	18,450	18,350	200	300
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	2,600	2,550	2,550	50	50
Food Stores	2,950	2,950	2,850	0	100
Eating & Drinking Pl.	7,250	7,250	7,150	0	100
All Other Retail	5,850	5,700	5,800	150	50
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	7,150	7,200	7,200	-50	-50
Services	23,800	23,900	23,050	-100	750
Government	26,100	26,050	26,050	50	50
Federal	10,350	10,450	10,500	-100	-150
State	7,200	7,100	6,950	100	250
Local	8,550	8,500	8,600	50	-50

Fairbanks

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	26,350	26,800	25,950	-450	400
Mining	100	100	50	0	50
Construction	1,950	2,000	2,100	-50	-150
Manufacturing	550	550	600	0	-50
Transportation	2,200	2,200	2,050	0	150
Trucking & Warehousing	400	400	350	0	50
Air Transportation	350	350	300	0	50
All Other Transportation	1,450	1,450	1,400	0	50
Trade	5,600	6,050	5,550	-450	50
Wholesale	700	700	750	0	-50
Retail	4,900	5,350	4,800	-450	100
Food Stores	850	850	850	0	0
All Other Retail	4,050	4,500	3,950	-450	100
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	800	850	900	-50	-100
Services	5,500	5,650	5,350	-150	150
Government	9,650	9,400	9,350	250	300
Federal	2,850	2,900	2,800	-50	50
State	4,150	3,850	4,050	300	100
Local	2,650	2,650	2,500	0	150

Anchorage-MatSu

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	108,150	109,350	107,900	-1,200	250
Mining	3,650	3,700	3,300	-50	350
Construction	5,200	5,650	6,500	-450	-1,300
Manufacturing	2,350	2,600	2,300	-250	50
Transportation	10,200	10,500	10,250	-300	-50
Trade	25,850	25,900	25,300	-50	550
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	7,600	7,650	7,650	-50	-50
Services	24,850	25,200	24,200	-350	650
Government	28,450	28,150	28,400	300	50

Interior

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	30,100	31,150	30,000	-1,050	100
Mining	250	300	200	-50	50
Construction	2,000	2,150	2,300	-150	-300
Manufacturing	550	550	600	0	-50
Transportation	2,500	2,650	2,450	-150	50
Trade	6,000	6,500	5,900	-500	100
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	900	900	1,000	0	-100
Services	5,900	6,200	5,750	-300	150
Government	12,000	11,900	11,800	100	200

Gulf Coast

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	19,700	21,000	19,650	-1,300	50
Mining	800	800	850	0	-50
Construction	1,000	1,100	1,250	-100	-250
Manufacturing	3,500	4,250	3,550	-750	-50
Seafood Processing	2,900	3,650	2,950	-750	-50
All Other Manufacturing	600	600	600	0	0
Transportation	1,300	1,350	1,300	-50	0
Trade	3,600	3,750	3,500	-150	100
Wholesale	400	400	400	0	0
Retail	3,200	3,350	3,100	-150	100
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	550	600	600	-50	-50
Services	3,250	3,450	3,150	-200	100
Government	5,700	5,700	5,450	0	250
Federal	500	550	550	-50	-50
State	1,800	1,850	1,600	-50	200
Local	3,400	3,300	3,300	100	100

Southeast Alaska

	Changes From:				
	p/ 10/88	r/ 9/88	10/87	9/88	10/87
Nonag. Wage & Salary	30,300	31,600	28,900	-1,300	1,400
Construction	1,000	1,000	1,100	0	-100
Manufacturing	4,750	5,450	4,550	-700	200
Seafood Processing	1,050	1,700	1,250	-650	-200
Lumber & Paper Prod.	3,450	3,500	3,100	-50	350
All Other Manufacturing	250	250	200	0	50
Transportation	2,200	2,400	2,000	-200	200
Trade	4,800	4,900	4,500	-100	300
Wholesale	450	450	400	0	50
Retail	4,350	4,450	4,100	-100	250
Finance-Ins. R.E.	1,100	1,150	1,000	-50	100
Services	4,650	4,900	4,600	-250	50
Government	11,600	11,600	11,000	0	600
Federal	2,050	2,050	2,000	0	50
State	5,200	5,300	5,000	-100	200
Local	4,350	4,250	4,000	100	350

Table 3

Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries ^{1/2}

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87
Mining	\$1,099.64	\$1,167.97	\$1,096.93	49.4	50.3	47.2	\$22.26	\$23.22	\$23.24
Construction	1,056.20	1,094.46	990.07	42.9	44.8	40.1	24.62	24.43	24.69
Manufacturing	566.35	477.98	506.46	43.7	38.3	39.2	12.96	12.48	12.92
Seafood Processing ..	366.77	283.72	284.97	43.2	34.6	35.4	8.49	8.20	8.05
Lumber & Paper Prod	763.06	731.25	732.79	46.9	45.0	45.6	16.27	16.25	16.07
Trans., Comm. & Util. ..	603.72	566.08	581.57	36.7	34.9	36.6	16.45	16.22	15.89
Trade	378.48	376.66	356.64	33.2	33.6	33.3	11.40	11.21	10.71
Wholesale	538.23	537.99	520.97	38.5	38.9	39.2	13.98	13.83	13.29
Retail	327.29	323.78	303.32	31.5	31.9	31.4	10.39	10.15	9.66
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	407.71	412.58	394.45	36.5	34.7	33.4	11.17	11.89	11.81

Benchmark: March 1987

¹ Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor² excludes eating and drinking establishments

Average Hours and Earnings Series: Averages are based on data for full- and part-time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

Now to the Anchorage-MatSu industries which have enjoyed the largest gains: Mining is up by nearly 12% and 400 jobs. Trade, services and manufacturing all posted over 2% growth for the year. Like most other regions, only state and local government showed over-the-month gains. Still, the area was able to hold unemployment 0.7% below last year's level with an October figure of 7.7%.

Mining also impacted the Interior region. Although the employment levels remain small, the area saw 25% growth in this industry over the past year. The area showed some growth for the year, although the growth was not evenly divided throughout the economy. Those industries showing over-the-year gains in the Interior region include: transportation, communications and utilities, trade, services, and government.

Normal Seasonal Downturn Expected

For the next several months, employment levels will, for the most part, continue their decline. Many Alaska businesses which successfully weathered the last economic storm are now prepared for the normal seasonal downturn. If the current trends of increased employment and renewed economic strength continue, perhaps the seasonal downturn will not be so steep, or the upswing so slow in coming as in past years.

Table 4

Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87	P/ 10/88	R/ 9/88	10/87
Alaska Statewide	238,815	241,760	248,707	20,055	17,573	22,816	8.4	7.3	9.2	218,760	224,187	225,891
Anch.-MatSu Region	124,915	125,162	130,648	9,594	8,760	10,914	7.7	7.0	8.4	115,321	116,402	119,734
Anchorage Borough	110,405	110,262	115,212	7,631	6,891	8,405	6.9	6.2	7.3	102,774	103,371	106,807
MatSu Borough	14,510	14,900	15,436	1,963	1,869	2,509	13.5	12.5	16.3	12,547	13,031	12,927
Gulf Coast Region	25,799	26,687	27,194	2,751	2,358	3,206	10.7	8.8	11.8	23,048	24,329	23,988
Kenai Peninsula Bor.	16,528	17,096	17,550	2,133	1,901	2,568	12.9	11.1	14.6	14,395	15,195	14,982
Kodiak Island Bor.	5,560	5,867	5,799	253	265	276	4.6	4.5	4.8	5,307	5,602	5,523
Valdez-Cordova	3,711	3,724	3,845	365	192	362	9.8	5.2	9.4	3,346	3,532	3,483
Interior Region	35,807	35,971	37,568	4,029	3,274	4,573	11.3	9.1	12.2	31,778	32,697	32,995
Fairbanks North Star Br.	30,658	31,113	32,346	3,202	2,862	3,838	10.4	9.2	11.9	27,456	28,251	28,508
Southeast Fairbanks ...	2,157	2,068	2,211	303	161	286	14.0	7.8	12.9	1,854	1,907	1,925
Yukon-Koyukuk	2,992	2,790	3,011	524	251	449	17.5	9.0	14.9	2,468	2,539	2,562
Northern Region	7,715	7,944	7,873	600	635	539	7.8	8.0	6.8	7,115	7,309	7,334
Nome	2,979	3,057	3,020	272	276	230	9.1	9.0	7.6	2,707	2,781	2,790
North Slope Borough ...	2,732	2,825	2,799	113	134	99	4.1	4.7	3.5	2,619	2,691	2,700
Northwest Arctic Bor. ...	2,004	2,062	2,054	215	225	210	10.7	10.9	10.2	1,789	1,837	1,844
Southeast Region	33,303	33,912	33,440	2,379	1,849	2,642	7.1	5.5	7.9	30,924	32,063	30,798
Haines Borough	835	863	860	55	54	83	6.6	6.3	9.7	780	809	777
Juneau Borough	14,635	15,095	14,592	846	800	860	5.8	5.3	5.9	13,789	14,295	13,732
Ketchikan Gateway Bor.	6,640	6,674	6,623	530	338	537	8.0	5.1	8.1	6,110	6,336	6,086
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketch.	2,525	2,519	2,530	309	221	323	12.2	8.8	12.8	2,216	2,298	2,207
Sitka Borough	3,945	4,035	4,005	237	190	312	6.0	4.7	7.8	3,708	3,845	3,693
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon	1,578	1,512	1,595	209	93	232	13.2	6.2	14.5	1,369	1,419	1,363
Wrangell-Petersburg	3,145	3,214	3,235	193	153	295	6.1	4.8	9.1	2,952	3,061	2,940
Southwest Region	11,276	12,084	11,984	702	697	942	6.2	5.8	7.9	10,574	11,387	11,042
Aleutian Islands	3,133	3,365	3,292	88	86	112	2.8	2.6	3.4	3,045	3,279	3,180
Bethel	4,369	4,681	4,664	312	312	428	7.1	6.7	9.2	4,057	4,369	4,236
Bristol Bay Borough ...	399	424	444	32	29	61	8.0	6.8	13.7	367	395	383
Dillingham	2,030	2,127	2,138	141	92	165	6.9	4.3	7.7	1,889	2,035	1,973
Wade Hampton	1,345	1,487	1,446	129	178	176	9.6	12.0	12.2	1,216	1,309	1,270

P/ = Preliminary

R/ = Revised

1987 Benchmark

Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor force data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey (CPS) in formulas used to allocate federal funds. Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor because Alaska's CPS sample size is inadequate to accurately indicate monthly changes in level. The sampling errors are random in nature, meaning that the unemployment rates, in any given month, are as likely to be high as frequently as they are low. The official definitions of unemployment, currently in place, exclude anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of each month. Most economists feel that Alaska's rural localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.

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